

WYDEN to reauthorize TAA that is included in the bill before us. Our legislation forms the basis of the TAA provisions that are included in this bill.

Maine workers have been hit particularly hard by mill closures and shuttered factories. In the last 15 years, Maine has lost 38 percent of its manufacturing jobs, nearly 31,000 jobs in total. While not all of those job losses are due to increased and unfair foreign competition, there is no doubt that workers in the manufacturing sector in Maine have been harmed by the outsourcing of their good-paying jobs to countries with much lower wages and environmental standards.

This last year was particularly difficult for workers in Maine's pulp and paper industry. In just the past year alone, the communities of Lincoln, East Millinocket, and Bucksport have all experienced devastating job losses due to the closures of paper mills. Those mills have been the financial anchors of those small towns, providing good jobs for generations of families. The second- and third-order economic effects on other businesses and their employees in those small communities are also significant.

In times of such great upheaval, laid-off employees need the time, the support, and the resources to learn the skills that will enable them to seek and secure new employment opportunities. These are skilled Americans who are eager to get back to work and who, with the right training, support, and opportunity, can find new jobs in in-demand fields.

Just this spring, I visited the Eastern Maine Community College in Bangor. I had the opportunity to talk with a group of students who are former employees of the Verso paper mill in Bucksport, which closed down last year completely unexpectedly. It was a huge and terrible surprise to the workers and to the community and surrounding area. But because of trade adjustment assistance, these former workers with whom I talked are now enrolled in a fine-furniture making program and are learning new skills for new jobs.

I was so impressed with their determination and their attitude. It is very difficult, if you have not been in school for decades, to enroll in a whole new field of study, but that is exactly what these laid-off workers were doing. Their determination to start new careers after years of working at the mill in Bucksport was inspiring. Each of them was enrolled thanks to the support provided by the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program. Without that program, they would not have had the funding, the support, and the resources necessary to enable them to do a mid-life career change.

Similarly, last year in Lincoln, ME, I met a woman who had spent many years working at the local tissue mill. This mill had a cycle of ups and downs over the years. When it was closed for a time years ago, this woman was thrown out of work, but her story had

a happy ending. Through TAA, she was able to learn new skills and find employment as a nursing home administrator, where she has been happily employed for a decade. It took a lot of courage for this woman who had been employed as a mill worker for many years to go into an entirely new career field, but she did so. She encouraged her fellow workers to recognize that through the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program, they too could find new skills, retrain in an area completely different from the work they had been doing, and have a happy ending.

Her story was inspiring. Because of TAA, for 10 years she has been providing for her family and contributing to her community. What a great return on investment. It would not have been possible without TAA. There are many more success stories like this one.

I thank Secretary Perez for expediting the TAA assistance these workers who are newly displaced have needed.

I would also note that since Maine is the State with the oldest median age in the Nation, this woman really picked a very good field in which to enroll. As a nursing home administrator, her skills are going to be in demand as we see the changing demographics not only of the State of Maine but of our Nation.

TAA programs have made a tremendous difference in the lives of those I have described, in the lives of those working in trade-affected industries in Maine, such as pulp and paper manufacturing, textile, and shoe production.

In fiscal year 2013 alone, more than 700 Mainers have benefited from the TAA programs, and more than 70 percent of the TAA participants in Maine have found employment within 3 months of completing their retraining programs made possible by TAA. Even more encouraging, of these participants who found employment, more than 90 percent were still employed in their new jobs 6 months later. Without TAA, it is very unlikely that would have happened.

Assisting American workers who are negatively affected by international trade—particularly when they are competing with workers with lower wages in countries with lower wages and lower environmental standards or none at all—is vitally important and the right thing to do.

In Maine, the effects of free-trade agreements have been decidedly mixed. While some past agreements have brought benefits to my State in the form of lowered tariffs on Maine products such as potatoes, lobster, and wild blueberries, jobs in many other industries have suffered terrible losses as a result of unfair foreign competition.

Our workers are the best in the world, and they can compete when there is a level playing field, but oftentimes they are competing against industries in developing countries that are paying lower wages, that don't have to comply with any kind of environmental standards, and that are

often subsidized by those governments—and that is not fair.

The least we can do is to reauthorize the trade adjustment programs which are successfully helping to retrain and reemploy American workers. That is a commonsense way we can help workers recover from the blows inflicted by some unfair trade agreements, so these Americans can start new jobs and new lives with fresh skills.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support the reauthorization of trade adjustment assistance and to oppose any amendments to end these vital programs.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

ENSURING TAX EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS THE RIGHT TO APPEAL ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1314, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1314) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a right to an administrative appeal relating to adverse determinations of tax-exempt status of certain organizations.

Pending:

Hatch amendment No. 1221, in the nature of a substitute.

Hatch (for Flake) amendment No. 1243 (to amendment No. 1221), to strike the extension of the trade adjustment assistance program.

Hatch (for Inhofe/Coons) modified amendment No. 1312 (to amendment No. 1221), to amend the African Growth and Opportunity Act to require the development of a plan for each sub-Saharan African country for negotiating and entering into free trade agreements.

Hatch (for McCain) amendment No. 1226 (to amendment No. 1221), to repeal a duplicative inspection and grading program.

Stabenow (for Portman) amendment No. 1299 (to amendment No. 1221), to make it a principal negotiating objective of the United States to address currency manipulation in trade agreements.

Brown amendment No. 1251 (to amendment No. 1221), to require the approval of Congress before additional countries may join the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement.

Wyden (for Shaheen) amendment No. 1227 (to amendment No. 1221), to make trade agreements work for small businesses.

Wyden (for Warren) amendment No. 1327 (to amendment No. 1221), to prohibit the application of the trade authorities procedures to an implementing bill submitted with respect to a trade agreement that includes investor-state dispute settlement.